Near Florence. 6th Sept.r 1824.

My dear Dilke,

Much as I desired to answer the letter I received from you on 19th August, and that immediately, I was compelled to defer it till to-day. I had undertaken a task, which as it was of great importance to the party for whom I undertook it, I mentally swore I would neither read nor write any thing else till it was fairly finished, and it turned out to be far more tedious and laborious than I had expected; and yesterday I washed my hands of it. This, I believe, is the first excuse of the kind I have had occasion to make; I have now lost you for 17 days, but had I done otherwise, I should have neglected a more serious duty. What you have written about Geo. Hiatt has in some measure given me pleasure, as I hope that what appears still doubtful may be cleared up. No one would rejoice more than myself to find him guiltless of the charge against him; and when I can rejoice on that score, I will make him all the amends in my power. At present every thing rests on his own speculation only in opposition to his brother's, but to Mr. Abbey's. Nor can I see, even if his assertion is correct, that he has any reason to complain of a charge being made against him, which by his own account he has taken every pains to establish. He purposely caused his brother to believe it, and through him his friends, as J K's consequent destitution compelled him to divulge the cause. His reason for this deception is so strange and inconsistent that it is barely credible; at least upon his last leaving England, which the reason could not, on the same grounds, have existed; still it is possible, from sheer want of common sense and common forethought. Now I will proceed downwards with your letter, not allowing a single fact you have stated unreplied to. He says I wrote to him letters which dominered and dictated; I deny it; my letter was very short & dry, and cold, not even accusing him, unless by implication; — what Mr. Harlan wrote I know not. It was always my belief, till I spoke with Mr. Abbey, that he took with him £640, or thereabouts, from his brother John. During the autumn previous to J's return from America, J. went frequently to his guardian endeavouring to procure £500 of his own money to lend to Mr. Haydon; he then told me that after that loan he should have about £200 remaining. This could not be effected on account of a trustee being in Holland at the time, and the idea of the loan was relinquished, from that and other causes. So persuaded was J. that he had £700, that he used to enter with me on the calculations respecting laying that sum out in ground rents, and I could not believe otherwise. Afterwards he had, at his brother's request, reminded him of an offer he had made to lend him money, sent all he had except £80 to him; so he told me expressly, thinking his "brother did not act rightly in leaving him so", — these were his words. He spoke in the same manner to another person (whose name I need not mention), and who informed me the sum was was £700, according to John's words. Some time after I went, at his desire, to Taylor & Hessey, to ask for him till Geo should remit back some of his money, he authorising

to tell J & H of his brother having borrowed all his money; they declined advancing money, and therefore I borrowed some from Strynsen for his purposes. Under these circumstances, I say, I could not have believed otherwise than I did. The charge therefore, contrary to G's supposition, did "originate directly from his brother", not from any thing "vaguely & indistinctly said, but frequently, and with complaints against him, and for this there is other testimony than my own. In the spring of 1822 I called on Mr. Abbey in Pancras Lane, when I asked him the amt. lent by John to George, upon the latter's second voyage to America; he answered "about £350 to £400 - he could not tell precisely without reference to his books, - something like that amount". When I said I understood it was about £640, he said "that was a mistake, - it could not be so much." On my regretting it was ever lent to him, his reply was - "and so do I regret it; I told John at the time not to lend it, and said all I could to prevent his doing so." Thus it appeared John had overrated his funds, likely enough in an unused to any thing like money affairs; but it took nothing from the charge against George, in a moral point of view, whether it was £640 or £350. George says his brother expended £1000 by the time he left the profession of surgery; while Mr. Abbey explained to me on the folly of his having left it, after he had spent £700 on it. You can inquire of Mr. Abbey on both these points, so contradictory to George's statements; and though it is certain Mr. Abbey spoke so to me, it is possible he spoke in both cases under an error, for both John & George might have allowed him to believe that he was borrowing £350, which may be disproved by the accounts; or Mr. Abbey might have spoken in forgetfulness of ~~a~~ back; and it is very possible he talked of £700 when he ought to have said £1000. George says he owed nothing to John for expences previously to the former's coming of age; this may have been the case, but John understood otherwise: for when walking in the Highlands, he told me George did owe him money on that account, and had repaid him, he knew not how much, as George in settling every thing before he left London, gave him no written account, and asked me if I thought he ought not ~~not~~ to have given one. I am aware that John had ~~a~~ debts owing to him of about £70, and he told me part of them were loans made by George, - but that he agreed to take them on his own shoulders, that George might have more to carry to America, and at George's request. This seems opposite to George's assertion of having left John £300 at that time; but John was likely to be in error, and it appears from George's account, it was his intention to deceive him on this point, not wishing it known he gave £300 of his own money. I cannot (I find) enter into the account of Tom's estate, as, through some slip of the pen which confuses it, you deduct £300 from £1100 and make £540 only remaining. Nor is it necessary; I have mentioned enough to show I could not have believed and said otherwise; and that if George is guiltless, he I contend took the best means to show himself guilty. I cannot say, nor can Hunt, from your letter, that George at present is exculpated; it is far from satisfactory, and Hunt thought so, without being acquainted with the circumstances I have related from my own and other's knowledge. Mr. Abbey may settle it quickly, and shall be most happy to hear I have been in the wrong; though I never reproach myself for speaking on the strong grounds I found